



Children and Families at Risk Working Group

Meeting Minutes

August 1, 2011, 11:00am – 1:00pm

Holy Family Food Pantry - 912 8th St. Waukegan, IL 60085

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 13, 10am-12pm at Voices for Illinois Children

Action Items:

1. Begin to put our areas for recommendation into buckets so that we can divide up focus between the working groups.
2. Send resource materials and data sources to Carissa, cgomez@feedingillinois.org, to gather and summarize.
3. Kate will follow up with Cristal Thomas on ISBE engagement in the working group.

Meeting Minutes

1. **Attendance:** In attendance: *Kate Maehr (Greater Chicago Food Depository), Kathy Ryg (Voices for Illinois Children), Barb Karcic (Holy Family Food Pantry), Julie Mikkelsen (USDA), John Cheney Egan (DCFS), Tracy Smith (Feeding Illinois), Dawn Melchiorre (Voices for Illinois Children), Jessica Chui (USDA), Allison Forrer (Feeding Illinois), Carissa Gomez (Feeding Illinois);* On the phone: *Penny Roth (IDHS), Nicole Robinson (Kraft Foods), Melissa Roy (Share Our Strength)*

Absent: *Mark Haller (ISBE)*

2. **Debrief of Holy Family Food Pantry Tour:**

- a. *Barb Karcic gave us a tour of their facility which hosts a children's meal program Monday through Thursday during lunch, a summer backpack program (distributed on Thursday and provides meals for Friday-Sunday), a soup kitchen Wednesday – Saturday, a food pantry twice a week, and a vegetable garden.*

- b. **The following topics were prompted by the tour as possible items to investigate further for Commission recommendations:**

- i. **Need for greater coordination:** *There is a need for greater coordination in communities to ensure an efficient and effective distribution of resources and to maximize nutritional access. Some local counties do not have an individual responsible for understanding and coordinating the emergency food system. It is important that each county have at least one person assigned this role.*

In addition, the community providers should coordinate their services. The group was interested in exploring other best practices from across the state. Food banks, with a network of 2,000 providers, were identified as a potential coordinator for social services in a community. Kate encouraged us to consider what constraints the food banks have that might prevent them from playing this role. Should consider investigating how we connect those that don't understand the resources that are available. Ideas included creating better certification or other systems to create and support well connected and high functioning service providers.

- ii. **Summer feeding programs for families:** *One gap in service that was noted was that children receive meals and often their parents are with them and are unable to get a meal. Kate suggested investigating Minnesota's model of private fundraising to generate funds to provide meals for adults and families to serve alongside child feeding programs. Their funding has come through a statewide campaign through the Minneapolis food bank and has connected with General Mills, Target and other corporate donors.*
- iii. **Operation of summer feeding programs:** *Julie Mikkelsen told us that schools sponsor most summer food service programs and that the seamless summer option has helped expand the program. Through seamless summer, schools are able to continue serving the way they serve during the school year. Recreation programs can operate both open (designated low income areas where anyone can arrive and receive a meal) and closed/enrolled sites. Additional sites include summer camps and health programs. In Chicago the USDA convened a working group to coordinate summer feeding programs. Kate discussed the push for Chicago Park District to become open, not enrolled, sites. CPS distributes flyers for summer meal programs at the end of the school year.*
- iv. **Understanding ISBE versus DHS coordination:** *ISBE coordinates school breakfast, lunch, after-school and summer feeding. Most other food programs go through IDHS. This is typical among most states. Pro – incentivizes participation from ISBE, Con – can be challenging because of coordination and separate set of relationships, fewer anti-hunger advocates within the organization.*
- v. **Better reporting structure in order to communicate needs with legislators:** *We discussed creating accountability in order to incentive improved administration. It was noted that the state board of education is currently required to report annually to the legislature on school breakfast but the report is not well presented. We discussed creating a better format and creating a state of the county to compliment the data being put out by FRAC at the state level. Kathy suggested one strategy to ensure legislators get this information is to present reports at subject matter hearing. This will get it in front of those who are actually forming policy.*

3. Working Group Overview and Timeline Document: *Kathy suggested that we make this document public as it is a good summary of our work. Talked through deadlines and priorities. As we have listening tour events we need to begin structuring recommendations.*

4. Working Group Recommendations Document introduction:

- a. *Purpose is to create measurable goals and ideas for funding, presents rationale and justification of recommendations.*
- b. *Understanding terms: General (all children and families), Other (targeted demographic).*

5. Action step updates

- a. *Best practices from Melissa Roy (Share Our Strength): Identified 20 new sites for summer feeding by doing a community survey. Offered to help with a letter campaign about breakfast programs to demonstrate to the public that breakfast time can also be instructional time and provide other advocacy tools.*
- b. *Draft letter of support to Chicago Public Schools: Steering Committee has agreed to send a letter in support of their steps to take on the breakfast program. Nicole – recommended a*

letter from a parent that is in support. Melissa made the offer to collect supportive testimony. A letter has been drafted and is being circulated for final review.

6. Begin to narrow areas of focus

- a. Previously suggested invitees: School districts (either someone from LUDA, management alliance, principal association), Illinois Action for Children (Sessy Nyman for the childcare perspective), PTA (parent representative), Teacher unions, Superintendents. *Who else do we need to have in this conversation to help form a recommendation and provide leadership?*
- b. We need to better understand the take up rate for federal programs so that we can target our recommendations. To do this we need better access to demographic data and best practices.
 - i. *One challenge is having access to program data. This has been a recommendation from several human services working groups and councils. . Something we should revisit to start structuring a recommendation. Developments/resources in this area include:*
 - 1. *What information and reports are out there? We need to compile them. Please send reports and sources to Carissa and she will coordinate for us.*
 - 2. *IDHS is currently working on the Framework planning project. It would collect data across 7 state departments.*
 - 3. *IECAM (Illinois Early Childhood Asset Mapping at University of Illinois) is a database developed by the University of Illinois that maps early childhood services. (<http://iecam.crc.uiuc.edu/index.html>)*
 - 4. *More accessible and comprehensive data from ISBE, particularly at a local/county level so we can better target services.*
 - 5. *Subscription data services – perhaps we can get reduced cost access.*
 - ii. *Creation of a toolkit of best practices to distribute to service providers. Nicole suggested to looking at exist FRAC tools.*

7. Listening Tour updates: Summary of upcoming events

- a. *At Peoria event one question we should ask is why are not all food banks doing summer/children feeding programs*
- b. *Discussion on the need to further engage Senator Millner on these issues. He will be at the Wayne Township stop.*

8. Next meeting

- a. *September meeting goals: begin to condense initial findings, consolidate ideas for in-depth exploration.*
- b. *Share resources we have access to and send them to Carissa to track.*
- c. *Next meeting date: Tuesday, September 13, Voices for Illinois Children at 10am-12pm.*